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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/859,705	05/17/2001	Michael Kai-Yin Au	YOR920000770US1	3974

7590 04/20/2004

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EXAMINER

HARLE, JENNIFER I

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3627

DATE MAILED: 04/20/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Applicati n N .

09/859,705

Applicant(s)

AU ET AL.

Examiner

Jennifer I. Harle

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MW

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the c v r sh et with the correspond nce address --
Period f r Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 1 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 17 May 2001.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-74 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☒ Claim(s) 1-74 are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Claims 1-74 are pending. Claims 1-74 are subject to a restriction requirement.

Election/Restrictions

1. Restriction to one of the following inventions is required under 35 U.S.C. 121:
 - I. Claims 1-16 and 33-47 drawn to a method and product in a primary data processing system, classified in class 705 subclass 27.
 - II. Claims 17-29, drawn to a system for processing commercial transactions, classified in class 705, subclass 16.
 - III. Claims 30-32, drawn to a system for processing commercial transactions, classified in class 705, subclass 16.
 - IV. Claims 33-47, drawn to a data processing system, classified in class 700, subclass 216.
 - V. Claims 48-62, drawn to a computer program product, classified in class 709, subclass 200.
 - VI. Claims 63-74, drawn to a system, classified in class 708, subclass 100.

The inventions are distinct, each from the other because of the following reasons:

2. Inventions I and II are related as process and apparatus for its practice. The inventions are distinct if it can be shown that either: (1) the process as claimed can be practiced by another materially different apparatus or by hand, or (2) the apparatus as claimed can be used to practice another and materially different process. (MPEP § 806.05(e)). In this case, the apparatus as claimed can be used to practice another and materially different process—a process that does not allocate inventory.

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3. Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above, because these inventions have acquired a separate status in the art as shown by their different classification and divergent subject matter, and because the search required for Group I is not required for Group II, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

4. Inventions I and III are related as process and apparatus for its practice. The inventions are distinct if it can be shown that either: (1) the process as claimed can be practiced by another materially different apparatus or by hand, or (2) the apparatus as claimed can be used to practice another and materially different process. (MPEP § 806.05(e)). In this case, the process and apparatus are not patentably distinct. Should Applicants choose invention I, invention III will also be examined. Should Applicants choose invention III, invention I will also be examined.

5. Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above, because these inventions have acquired a separate status in the art as shown by their different classification and divergent subject matter, and because the search required for Group I is not required for Group III, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

6. Inventions I and IV are related as process and apparatus for its practice. The inventions are distinct if it can be shown that either: (1) the process as claimed can be practiced by another materially different apparatus or by hand, or (2) the apparatus as claimed can be used to practice another and materially different process. (MPEP § 806.05(e)). In this case, the process and apparatus are not patentably distinct. Should Applicants choose invention I, invention I In this case, the process and apparatus are not patentably distinct. Should Applicants choose invention I, invention III will also be examined. Should Applicants choose invention IV, invention I will

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also be examined. will also be examined. Should Applicants choose invention I, invention IV will also be examined.

7. Inventions II and III are related as subcombinations disclosed as usable together in a single combination. The subcombinations are distinct from each other if they are shown to be separately usable. In the instant case, invention II has separate utility such as forwarding order to primary nodes. See MPEP § 806.05(d).

8. Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above, because these inventions have acquired a separate status in the art as shown by their different classification and divergent subject matter, and because the search required for Group II is not required for Group III, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

9. Inventions II and IV are related as subcombinations disclosed as usable together in a single combination. The subcombinations are distinct from each other if they are shown to be separately usable. In the instant case, invention IV has separate utility such as being used in inventory allocation. See MPEP § 806.05(d).

10. Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above, because these inventions have acquired a separate status in the art as shown by their different classification and divergent subject matter, and because the search required for Group II is not required for Group IV, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

11. Inventions II and V are related as combination and subcombination. Inventions in this relationship are distinct if it can be shown that (1) the combination as claimed does not require the particulars of the subcombination as claimed for patentability, and (2) that the subcombination has utility by itself or in other combinations (MPEP § 806.05(c)). In the instant

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case, the combination (II) as claimed does not require the particulars of the subcombination as claimed because combination does not require secondary instructions for allocating inventory associated with the catalog. The subcombination has separate utility such as a program product for dispensing or sending catalogs.

12. Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above, because these inventions have acquired a separate status in the art as shown by their different classification and divergent subject matter, and because the search required for Group II is not required for Group V, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

13. Inventions II and V are related as combination and subcombination. Inventions in this relationship are distinct if it can be shown that (1) the combination as claimed does not require the particulars of the subcombination as claimed for patentability, and (2) that the subcombination has utility by itself or in other combinations (MPEP § 806.05(c)). In the instant case, the combination (II) as claimed does not require the particulars of the subcombination as claimed because combination does not require secondary instructions for allocating inventory associated with the catalog. The subcombination has separate utility such as a program product for dispensing or sending catalogs.

14. Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above, because these inventions have acquired a separate status in the art as shown by their different classification and divergent subject matter, and because the search required for Group II is not required for Group V, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

15. Inventions II and VI are related as subcombinations disclosed as usable together in a single combination. The subcombinations are distinct from each other if they are shown to be

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separately usable. In the instant case, invention VI has separate utility such as being used in inventory allocation. See MPEP § 806.05(d).

16. Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above, because these inventions have acquired a separate status in the art as shown by their different classification and divergent subject matter, and because the search required for Group II is not required for Group IV, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

17. Inventions III and IV are related as subcombinations disclosed as usable together in a single combination. The subcombinations are distinct from each other if they are shown to be separately usable. In the instant case, invention VI has separate utility such as being used in inventory allocation. See MPEP § 806.05(d).

18. Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above, because these inventions have acquired a separate status in the art as shown by their different classification and divergent subject matter, and because the search required for Group III is not required for Group IV, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

19. Inventions III and V are related as combination and subcombination. Inventions in this relationship are distinct if it can be shown that (1) the combination as claimed does not require the particulars of the subcombination as claimed for patentability, and (2) that the subcombination has utility by itself or in other combinations (MPEP § 806.05(c)). In the instant case, the combination (III) as claimed does not require the particulars of the subcombination as claimed because combination does not require secondary instructions for allocating inventory associated with the catalog. The subcombination has separate utility such as a program product for dispensing or sending catalogs.

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20. Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above, because these inventions have acquired a separate status in the art as shown by their different classification and divergent subject matter, and because the search required for Group III is not required for Group V, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

21. Inventions III and VI are related as subcombinations disclosed as usable together in a single combination. The subcombinations are distinct from each other if they are shown to be separately usable. In the instant case, invention VI has separate utility such as being used in inventory allocation. See MPEP § 806.05(d).

22. Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above, because these inventions have acquired a separate status in the art as shown by their different classification and divergent subject matter, and because the search required for Group III is not required for Group VI, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

23. Inventions IV and V are related as combination and subcombination. Inventions in this relationship are distinct if it can be shown that (1) the combination as claimed does not require the particulars of the subcombination as claimed for patentability, and (2) that the subcombination has utility by itself or in other combinations (MPEP § 806.05(c)). In the instant case, the combination (IV) as claimed requires the particulars of the subcombination as claimed. As currently claimed, these inventions are not patentably distinct. Should Applicant also elect IV, invention V will also be examined. Should Applicants choose invention V, invention IV will also be examined.

24. Inventions IV and VI are related as subcombinations disclosed as usable together in a single combination. The subcombinations are distinct from each other if they are shown to be

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separately usable. In the instant case, invention VI has separate utility such as being used in communications via the communications unit. See MPEP § 806.05(d).

25. Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above, because these inventions have acquired a separate status in the art as shown by their different classification and divergent subject matter, and because the search required for Group IV is not required for Group VI, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

26. Inventions V and VI are related as combination and subcombination. Inventions in this relationship are distinct if it can be shown that (1) the combination as claimed does not require the particulars of the subcombination as claimed for patentability, and (2) that the subcombination has utility by itself or in other combinations (MPEP § 806.05(c)). In the instant case, the combination (VI) as claimed does not require the particulars of the subcombination as claimed because combination does not require the corresponding structure and equivalents thereof of the secondary instructions for allocating inventory associated with the catalog. The subcombination has separate utility such as managing a catalog.

27. Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above, because these inventions have acquired a separate status in the art as shown by their different classification and divergent subject matter, and because the search required for Group V is not required for Group VI, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

28. Because this restriction is 6 ways, this application is deemed complex. Therefore, a telephone call was not made. See MPEP §812.01.

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29. Applicants are advised that the reply to this requirement to be complete must include an election of the invention to be examined even though the requirement be traversed (37 C.F.R. §1.143).

30. Applicant is reminded that upon the cancellation of claims to a non-elected invention, the inventorship must be amended in compliance with 37 CFR 1.48(b) if one or more of the currently named inventors is no longer an inventor of at least one claim remaining in the application. Any amendment of inventorship must be accompanied by a request under 37 CFR 1.48(b) and by the fee required under 37 CFR 1.17(i).

31. Regarding the groups of inventions that are not considered patentably distinct at this time, should Applicants amend this application (in any future amendment) so that the groups of inventions *become* patentably distinct, the non-elected groups will be reassessed and possibly withdrawn from consideration,

32. Moreover, if Applicants believe that particular groups of inventions are *not* patentably distinct, Applicants should point this out in their next response. If the Examiner concurs, the Examiner may withdraw or regroup the inventions at that time.

Conclusion

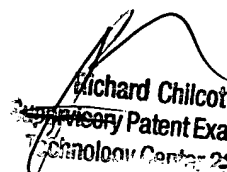
Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Jennifer I. Harle whose telephone number is 703.306.2906. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Thursday, 6:30 am to 5:00 pm,.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Robert Olszewski can be reached on 703.308.5183. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Jennifer Ione Harle
April 19, 2004


Richard Chilcot
Senior Patent Examiner
Technology Center 25
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